

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 002857

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,
THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS

Americans bomb Iraqi wedding: 40 killed - Hurriyet
Day of massacres: US kills 45 civilians, Israel 15 -
Milliyet
Israel massacres 23 civilians - Turkiye
Israel, US shed blood in Middle East - Sabah
FM Gul hopeful of EU accession talks date for Turkey -
Milliyet
FM Gul wants release of Leyla Zana - Sabah
First torture conviction: Pvt. Sivits sentenced to one year
in prison - Aksam
Another 'shame' of torture: One year jail term for torturer
- Turkiye
Gas price in US goes over \$2/gallon - Hurriyet
Georgia's Saakashvili visits Turkey - Aksam

OPINION MAKERS

American forces kill 45, wedding becomes massacre - Radikal
US, Israel kill 75 civilians in Iraq, Palestine - Yeni Safak
Israeli missiles hit civilians - Cumhuriyet
Black Wednesday in Middle East - Zaman
Israel applies unseen brutality - Yeni Safak
US troops torture Reuters members in Iraq - Yeni Safak
Israeli missiles kill 22 Palestinians protesters - Radikal
Torturer US soldier sentenced to one year - Zaman
Karamanlis can't convince Annan to revise Cyprus plan -
Cumhuriyet
Zebari opposes withdrawal of coalition forces from Iraq -
Cumhuriyet
Zarkawi claims responsibility for killing IGC chairman -
Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

EU, Turkey: At the EU-Turkey Accession Partnership Council meeting in Brussels, EU representatives told Turkish officials that Turkey it is falling short in six areas of reform, including Kurdish-language broadcasting, freedom of religion for non-Muslims, and elimination of torture. The EU also made clear that the imprisonment of pro-Kurdish DEP lawmakers is not in line with EU political criteria. FM Gul said after the meeting on Tuesday that the only cloud hanging over Turkey's efforts to win a date to begin accession talks with the EU is the imprisonment of Leyla Zana and three other pro-Kurdish lawmakers. 'I wish that the Kurdish lawmakers had been released, but we cannot put pressure on the judiciary to that end,' Gul said. A US official praised the Turkish reform effort as 'excellent,' but urged further concrete steps forward in implementation, "Hurriyet" reports from Washington. 'The EU should give Turkey a date for accession talks by the end of the year. We will be stressing that repeatedly at the June NATO Summit in Istanbul,' the anonymous US source said.

Turkish parliamentary delegation visits Palestine: Seven members of the Turkish-Palestinian Friendship Group traveled to Palestine on Wednesday to meet with Palestinian leaders Arafat, Ahmad Qurei and Nabil Shaath, and with local NGOs. AKP lawmaker Huseyin Tanriverdi, the head of the delegation, said the group intended to make a humanitarian contribution to the peace process in the Middle East. Israel's

Ambassador to Turkey, Pinhas Avivi, said after meeting with Tanriverdi in Ankara that the lawmakers are 'biased.' Avivi called on the delegation to meet with Israeli officials as well. Tanriverdi stressed the Turks' sensitivity with regard to the killing of civilians in Palestine, and urged Israel to end military operations there.

Cyprus: FM Abdullah Gul, in Moscow to attend a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) with Russia, the US, the UN and the EU, is expected to urge Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov not to veto a prospective UNSC resolution that would end the international isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. Meanwhile, 'TRNC PM' Mehmet Ali Talat said that early elections are an option in northern Cyprus following the resignation of three lawmakers from the coalition's parliamentary group. Talat said the current distribution of seats in the 'TRNC parliament' did not represent the 65 percent of Turkish Cypriots who voted for the reunification of Cyprus in the referendum held in April.

Broadcasts in Kurdish: Despite a parliamentary decision to allow broadcasting in languages other than Turkish, papers report that implementation is still lacking. A disagreement continues between the public broadcaster TRT, Turkey's media watchdog Radio and TV High Council (RTUK), and the related state ministry about whether such broadcasts should be done through TRT or by private broadcasters. PM Erdogan has instructed all three institutions to end the disagreement and begin broadcasts in Kurdish as soon as possible.

EU report on compulsory military service: A report submitted to the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly called on Turkey and other countries to recognize the right of conscientious objection to compulsory military service. Turkey rejected down the call, saying the right to conscientious objection was not protected in all European countries. The EU will discuss the report at a meeting in June.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq/Abu Ghraib; World Economic Forum

"Human Rights Report and Racism"

Turgut Tarhanli wrote in the liberal-intellectual Radikal (5/20): "The US approach toward human rights is designed to help the US have more influence over world affairs. In other words, the Washington administration treats the human rights concept as a tool to be used both in domestic politics and in international relations. ... This year the Department of State Human Rights Report has seemed to lose its influence following the Abu Ghraib photos. For the people of the US as well as the Washington administration, there is a serious violation of human rights - namely, racism. This racism was even endorsed by Secretary Rumsfeld in his approach to the Abu Ghraib case during the Congressional investigation. It is very important that human rights organizations around the world, and especially those in the US, stand up and call the US administration to account for this racism."

"A La Americana"

Oktay Eksi wrote in the mass appeal Hurriyet (5/20): "The one-year sentence for US soldier Jeremy Sivits does not constitute justice at all. President Bush tried to argue that the torture in Iraq was an individual case, but evidently the abuse was systematic. There is even more to this scandal, because General Sanchez, who is now advocating the most severe punishment for the torturers, had in fact been providing guidance to the torturers since October 12, 2003. ... General Miller, who was placed in charge of the prisons, was portraying some of the torture methods as legitimate. His remarks reminded me of President Bush's comments defending Rumsfeld. It was also interesting to see Wolfowitz admitting that there had been miscalculations in Iraq at the same time Bush was defending Rumsfeld full blast."

"The Train of Reform"

Hasan Cemal commented in the mass appeal Milliyet (5/19): "The World Economic Forum continued to discuss reforms and changes that are at the top of the agenda in the Arab world. Although this issue has been under discussion for a long time, the tone at this event was rather different. ... During last year's World Economic Forum, change and reform had been mentioned more seriously and with greater urgency. This year it is not the same. What changed over the past year? The Bush Administration's credibility has fallen drastically. The US' moral authority has been fatally crippled by the abuses at Abu-Ghraib and by the ongoing problems in Iraq. President Bush has lost his credibility

in the Arab world. US officials such as Secretary of State Powell and Paul Bremer gave very confident statements at last year's meeting. This year, the picture is different. American officials are downbeat. The positive atmosphere has disappeared. The atmosphere is dominated by worry and uncertainty. The violence, terror, and torture will never end in this geography unless the train of reform finally arrives. But, it doesn't appear likely that the reform train can take leave the station as long as the Bush-Rumsfeld duo stays in power."

EDELMAN